

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 PC-01 ACDA-07 EB-08 AGRE-00

COME-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 MC-02 /100 W

-----091335Z 085746 /53

R 091209Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3824

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

UFHLV/AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA 257

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 KHARTOUM 0795

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, SU

SUBJECT: SITUATION IN SUDAN - WINTER 1977

REF: 76 KHARTOUM 3586 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. PAST THREE MONTHS HAVE BEEN CHARACTERIZED
BY INTENSE GOS POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTED
BY DEEPENING COOLNESS IN GOS/EPMG TIES AND CONCERN OVER
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INTERNAL SECURITY. SIGNIFICANT LOCAL EVENTS INCLUDED SECOND
TRIENNIAL SSU CONFERENCE WHICH WAS FOLLOWED BY CABINET
RESHUFFLE, AND COMPLETION 5-YEAR INTERIM TRANSITION PERIOD
FOR INTERATION OF AUTONOMOUS SOUTH ENVISAGED IN ADDIS
ACCORDS WHICH WILL REMAIN IN FORCE PERMANENTLY. RAPID
DETERIORATION SUDAN/ETHIOPIA RELATIONS HAS BEEN FOLLOWED BY
INCREASING PUBLIC SUPPORT BY GOS FOR ERITREAN SELF-

DETERMINATION AS WELL AS FOR EDU. IN RELATED FOREIGN AFFAIRS DEVELOPMENTS, PRESIDENTS SADAT, ASSAD AND NIMEIRI HELD TRIPARTITE SUMMIT HERE FEB 27-28 WHICH RESULTED IN SUDAN JOINING EGYPT/SYRA JOINT POLITICAL COMMAND, THEREBY BECOMING BIT MORE CLOSELY INVOLVED IN MIDDLE EAST ISSUES. MEANWHILE, SUMMIT SIGNED SUPPORT BY TWO IMPORTANT ARAB LEADERS FOR NIMEIRI RE ETHIOPIA AND OTHER HORN ISSUES. RELATIONS WITH US CONTINUE EVOLVE CORDIALLY, AND DURING PERIOD NIMEIRI PUBLICLY STRESSED HIS DESIRE FOR STRONG TIES WITH US, INCLUDING IN MILITARY AREA. END SUMMARY.

1. PAST THREE MONTHS HAVE BEEN CHARACTERIZED BY INTENSE GOS POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY, HIGHLIGHTED BY DEEPENING COOLNESS IN GOS/EPMG TIES, AND CONTINUING CONCERN OVER INTERNAL SECURITY. SECOND TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF SSU, INVOLVING SOME TWO THOUSAND DELEGATES FROM ALL OVER SUDAN, ENDORSED MAJOR REGIME POLICIES, APPROVED PROPOSED SIX-YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN, REELECTED NIMEIRI AS HEAD OF SSU, AND HELPED CHOOSE NEW CENTRAL COMMITTEE. NEW SSU EXECUTIVE BUREAU WAS SUBSEQUENTLY NAMED, AFTER WHICH NIMEIRI RESHUFFLED HIS CABINET. ALL STEPS WERE CAREFULLY CHOREOGRAPHED BY LEADERSHIP WHICH REMAINS ESSENTIALLY UNCHANGED, ALTHOUGH SOME SLIGHT RIGHTWARD MOVEMENT WAS EVIDENT. SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT CLEARLY REMAIN DOMINANT CONCERNS OF SUDAN'S LEADERS.

3. DESPITE FEB 2 JUBA AIRPORT SHOOTING INCIDENT AND RUMORS OF FURTHER TROUBLE, FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF ADDIS ABABA ACCORDS ENDING CIVIL WAR PASSED UNEVENTFULLY. INTERIM TRANSITION
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PERIOD FOR INTEGRATION OF AUTONOMOUS SOUTH ENVISAGED IN ADDIS ACCORDS NOW COMPLETED, BUT PRESIDENT NIMEIRI HAS UNDERLINED THAT ADDIS ACCORDS WILL REMAIN IN FORCE PERMANENTLY.

4. THESE IMPORTANT, SYMBOLIC EVENTS REPRESENTED NEW EFFORT INSTITUTIONALIZE, AND BROADEN SUPPORT FOR, NIMEIRI REGIME. WE DOUBT THAT MUCH WAS ACHIEVED BEYOND NEGATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF AVOIDING FURTHER TROUBLE. APPARENTLY GOS HAD INTELLIGENCE THAT COUP ATTEMPT WOULD BE MADE AND MAXIMUM SECURITY ALERT PREVAILED DURING PERIOD. ARREST OF SOME PROMINENT COMMUNISTS WAS WIDELY PUBLICIZED. ALERT STATUS PROBABLY WAS IMPORTANT FACTOR IN NIPPING IN BUD JUBA PLOT. BEHIND SUCH ANTI-REGIME MANEUVERS, GOS INCREASINGLY SAW NEFARIOUS COMBINATION OF ANSAR REBELS, LIBYA, ETHIOPIA AND USSR. GOS REMAINED CONCERNED OVER LIBYAN MACHINATIONS IN CHAD, CAE AND UGANDA. MOST SERIOUS PROBLEM, HOWEVER, REMAINED ETHIOPIA WHERE INCREASINGLY RADICAL GOVERNMENT HAS BEGUN COOPERATE WITH QADHAFI AND HAS MOVED CLOSER TO SOVIETS.

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD

5. MOST DRAMATIC FOREIGN POLICY DEVELOPMENT SINCE LAST
DECEMBER HAS BEEN RAPID DETERIORATION SUDAN/ETHIOPIA RELAT-
IONS. THIS WAS TRIGGERED BY MOUNTING GOS IMPATIENCE WITH EPMG
HARD LINE OVER ERITREA, SUSPICION THAT DIRG COOPERATING WITH
QADHAFI AND ANSAR TO STRIKE AT NIMEIRI REGIME, AND CONCERN
THAT MENGISTU BECOMING TOO BEHOLDEN TO MOSCOW. FRUSTRATED
VOER FAILURE REVERSE THESE TRENDS THROUGH QUIET DIPLOMACY,
NIMEIRI WARNED EPMG IN DECEMBER SPEECHES AGAINST HOSTILE
ACTIVITY, AND FOR FIRST TIME PUBLICLY SEEMED ENDORSE ERITREAN
INDEPENDENCE IN LATE JANUARY RESPONSE TO TFERE BENTE ATTACK.

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MOST RECENT GOS PUBLIC STATEMENTS HAVE ABJURED SUCH DIRECT LANGUAGE, TALKING INSTEAD OF ERITREAN "SELF-DETERMINATION" BY QUOTE PEACEFUL MEANS UNQUOTE. BUT SUDANESE SUPPORT FOR ERITREAN GUERRILLAS AND EDU HAS CONTINUED GROW, INCLUDING PROVISION FACILITIES OMDURMAN RADIO FOR ELF/PLF.

6. TO BUTTRESS NIMEIRI AGAINST EXTERNAL THREATS, SADAT AND ASSAD VISITED KHARTOUM FEB 27-28. TRIPARTITE QUOTE SUMMIT UNQUOTE RESULTED IN SUDAN JOINING EGYPTIAN-SYRIAN JOINT POLITICAL COMMAND AND THEREBY BECOMING BIT MORE CLOSELY INVOLVED IN MIDEAST ISSUE, WHILE SIGNALING SUPPORT BY THESE TWO IMPORTANT ARAB LEADERS FOR NIMEIRI RE ETHIOPIA AND OTHER HORN ISSUES. GOS SOURCES INDICATE QUOTE SUMMIT UNQUOTE ALSO SEEN AS INDIRECT MESSAGE TO RUSSIANS TO AVOID UNDERMINING RED SEA SECURITY.

7. AGAINST THIS BACK-DROP, GOS CONTINUED GRAPPLE WITH ENDEMIC ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. SENIOR GOS LEADERS INCLUDING PM BAKR VISITED SAUDI ARABIA AND GULF IN MID-FEB TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT. NOT CLEAR WHAT SUCCESS ACHIEVED, BUT SUDANESE ARE OPTIMISTIC THAT MORE AID ON WAY --- EVEN IF DAY-TO-DAY PROBLEMS CONTINUE. MEANWHILE, FINISHING TOUCHES WERE BEING PUT ON SIX-YEAR PLAN WHICH SHOULD BE APPROVED SOON BY PEOPLES' ASSEMBLY. SCHEDULED MID-MARCH AAAID MEETING SHOULD RESULT IN SOME MOVEMENT ON THAT FRONT. DESPITE DISAPPOINTING COTTON CROP, INITIAL REPORTS SUGGEST SUBSTANTIAL SALES OF COTTON, (INCLUDING CARRYOVERS FROM LAST YEAR'S CROP), AS WELL AS OF OTHER AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS, SUGGESTING THAT NORMALLY BLEAK FINANCIAL AND PAYMENTS SITUATION MAY BE TEMPORARILY EASED.

8. BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH USG CONTINUED EVOLVE CORDIALLY. WITH SIGNING PL-480 WEHAT AGREEMENT LATE FEB, FIRST NEW SUBSTANTIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM SINCE PRESENT NIMEIRI'S VISIT TO US LAST JUNE WILL SOON BE IMPLEMENTED. NIMEIRI REFERRED IN POSITIVE TERMS TO US AT SSU CONFERENCE,

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AND IN MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY SPEECH FEB 21, EMPHASIZING SIGNIFICANCE USG WILLINGNESS CONSIDER MAKING ARMS SALES TO SUDAN. DURING LATE FEB VISITS DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY SEELYE HERE AND MINSTATE FONAFFS DENG TO US, BOTH SIDES WERE ABLE EXCHANGE VIEWS AT SENIOR LEVELS. NIMEIRI'S PROMPT HELP RE AMCITS UGANDA EVIDENCE CLOSER GOS/USG TIES WHICH NOW EXIST.

9. BARRING UNFORESEEN CRISIS, SPRING SHOULD WITNESS LESS FRENETIC PACE. MAXIMUM ALERT ALREADY RELAXED BUT GOS CONCERN OVER LIBYAN, ETHIOPIAN AND COMMUNIST ACTIVITIES WILL CONTINUE

TO BE TOP PRIORITY. ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WILL ALSO REQUIRE CLOSE
ATTENTION. RELATIONS WITH US SHOULD REMAIN WARM, BUT MOOD
COULD CHANGE IF USG TAKES WHAT SUDANESE PERCEIVE BE UNWARR-
ANTED NEGATIVE POSITIONS RE CERTAIN PENDING MILITARY SALES,
PARTICULARLY, IF RENEWED SALES TO EHTIOPIA SHOULD OCCUR.
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